

REMARKS

The subject application has been thoroughly reviewed in light of the outstanding Office Action of October 19, 2004. Claims 19, 20, 22-25, 27, 28, 30-33 are pending, with claims 19, 24, 27 and 32 being independent and amended in the present response. Claims 21, 26, 29 and 34 have been canceled without prejudice and/or disclaimer of subject matter. Original claims 1-18 were previously canceled. Each of the issues raised in the outstanding Action are addressed below.

Allowability of Claims

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 21, 26, 29 and 34 are allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants have incorporated the claim language of each of these claims in the respective base independent claim. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance.

§102 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 19, 20, 22-25, 27, 28 and 30-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as reciting subject matter that is allegedly anticipated by U.S. patent no. 6,401,080 (Bigus et al.). While not addressing the merits of the Actions' position, Applicants have amended each of independent claims 19, 24, 27 and 32 with the claim language from dependent claims 21, 26, 29 and 34, respectively. These claims were indicated as allowable in the Action if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, the independent claims are not allowable as are the remaining dependent claims. Withdrawal of this prior art rejection is now respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that the issues raised in the Office Action of October 19, 2004 have all been addressed. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

It is believed that no additional fees, save for the fee for extending the time for response, are due. In the event that it is determined that any additional fees are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the undersigned's Deposit Account No. **50-0311**, Reference No. 22097-007, Customer No. 35437.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 692-6803. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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